

REMARKS

This Amendment and Response to Non-Final Office Action is being submitted in response to the non-final Office Action mailed March 8, 2007. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 10-14, 15-17, 19-21, 24-32, and 35-39 are pending in the Application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has stated that claims 15-16, 22, 25 – 28 and 39 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Morikawa et al., US patent 6,309,507. Claims 1-8, 11-14, 17-21 and 35-38 also stand rejected under 36 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hays, US Patent 2004/0058603 in view of Morikawa et al. US patent 6,309,507.

Further, in the Official Action, the Examiner has stated that claims 9-10, 23-24, and 29-32 stand **objected to** as being dependent from a rejected base claim. According to the Examiner's admission, these claims would be **allowable** if rewritten in independent form. By way of this Amendment, Applicant has amended base claims 1 and 15 to incorporate the limitations of claim 9 and 23, respectively, without prejudice or disclaimer to continued examination on the merits. These amendments are fully supported in the Specification, Drawings, and Claims of the Application and no new matter has been added. Further, Applicant has canceled claim 8-9 and 22-23. Applicant has also amended base claim 35 to include the limitation of a cross-linking enhancer. Accordingly, the stated rejections and the cited art relative to base claims 1, 15 and 35 are now believed to be overcome. Further, since claims 2-3, 5-7, 10-14, 16-17, 19-21, 24-28, 29-32, and 36-39 are dependent from base

claims 1, 15 and/o 35, said claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests favorable action with regard to these claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicant would like to thank Examiner for the attention and consideration accorded the present Application. Should Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place the Application in condition for allowance, Examiner is encouraged to contact undersigned Counsel at the telephone number, facsimile number, address, or email address provided below. It is not believed that any fees for additional claims, extensions of time, or the like are required beyond those that may otherwise be indicated in the documents accompanying this paper. However, if such additional fees are required, Examiner is encouraged to notify undersigned Counsel at Examiner's earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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